1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

mutters "yes, yes, yes" while his superior is talking but keeps his eyes cast downwards; to very powerful superiors like the Shehu he must not talk directly at all, but to an intermediary. Wives of such persons are treated like senior in-laws. Indeed, given the traditional practice of giving wives to clients, often from among one's own daughters, it is quite possible that the wife of a superior will one day become the mother-in-law of a client subordinate.

As a person grows up in his family, he also learns that there are some people with whom he can have very permissive relations. The ideal person is a grandparent, although a similar relationship exists between a spouse and all of his younger in-laws. A young boy can go to his grandfather's house and take things, pull his grandfather's beard, and generally misbehave, all the while receiving only a pat on the head for such licentiousness. Sex differences do not count here although there is sexual joking especially in the relations between a person and a junior in-law of the opposite sex. Later in life young boys and girls learn that such joking (*sulī*) is a special form of interaction that can also be carried out between traditionally competitive occupational groups and traditionally hostile ethnic groups. On an individual basis one person in such a relationship calls the other "grandson" and the "grandson," being the younger, calls the older man "grandfather." The Kanuri explain that this helps to alleviate any tensions which may develop between the persons in such groups who are natural competitors or by tradition hostile to one another.

Finally, in the extended family and the household a young person grows up with brothers, sisters, and cousins who are also called siblings. The closer the age and interests of "siblings" of the same sex, the greater the solidarity and friendship. During childhood the young person usually chooses a young age-mate from amongst his siblings or cousins as his *ashirmanzə* or "secrets man," the person who knows his most intimate thoughts, hopes, and fears. Later in life, he chooses other *ashirmanzə* from inside his kinship network and outside it. He learns the faculty of intimacy, however, in his youthful friendships in the family and the household.

The family and the household then are orbits in which ways of behaving are learned and these characteristic norms of behavior are used for wider-scale social relations throughout the individual's life. At the core of these relations is *bərzum* discipline-respect. As well shall see, Bornu is an interwoven set of economic and political hierarchies, and this relationship of *bərzum* serves as the chief mechanism for the proper functioning of these complex relations between superiors and their subordinates.

The Household

Kinship may form the biological and the behavioral basis for Kanuri society, but it does not provide a place for such relations to operate. The Kanuri live in cities, villages, and hamlets and the basic unit of organization in these settlements is the household, rather than the family or any set of kinship groups. Even though these may be synonymous in some cases, in many compounds family and household are certainly not the same, and the distinction is fundamental to an understanding of the society. Furthermore the household, or compound as it is sometimes called, is stable in comparison to the family. The family can be split, and

171 602 The aman with the matrilateral group (to which Smith refers (1) for the Hausa) is a variety of mutual risk-sharing based on affection and the much more limited scope for conflict found in this less complex relational system.

602 433 On the face of it, the distinctions within the descent system would seem to have much significance for the analysis of commercial growth in Bornu. If there is more and easier credit facilities in the interpersonal relationships of the matrilateral group, it would seem as if this might be a useful model of organization for future economic development, which requires credit and loans.

602 571 [433] A swift look in any direction at functioning social relations in Kanuri society is enough to dispel such a theory. And the answer is quite simple but important. In the last analysis trust based merely on affection and lack of conflicting interests is not adequate to the task of maintaining the complex interrelationships necessary for the continuity of social life. To obtain a workable social organization of any kind requires power and authority and discipline, and these are patently scarce in the matrilateral structure, or at least much less intensified while they are key aspects of the patrilateral system. Besides this, indeed as an integral part of it, there is the more fundamental distinction of territoriality. Although aman of an affective nature which can involve potential risk-sharing of property is present with the mother's kin group, there is in most cases no inherent social organization in the mother's family which joins her and the rest of her relatives together as a functioning social unit in any one place. The custom [591] of patrilocal and/or neolocal marriage forbids such an eventuality. By [572] the same token, ordinary friendships beyond the kinship system include varying amounts of this same kind of aman when occurring between social equals.

(1) Smith, M.G. The Economy of Hausa Communities of Zaria, Colonial Research Studies No. 16 (The Colonial Office, London) 1955, p. 47.

571 [602] [601] joking takes the form (usually) of the grandparent-grandchild relationship. The younger refers to and addresses the elder as kaka (grandparent) while the elder may refer to the younger as diwa (grandchild) or address him as kaka. Joking between occupations was observed more frequently than between ethnic groups, while no [829] inter-clan joking was seen at all. Most people do not know the clan membership of the people they associate with in their everyday life.

Friendship and Fondness Relations (numkam)

572 602 The friendship and/or fondness relationships include those interpersonal relations wherein ego finds mutual affection, sympathy and community of interests. As a norm or dimension of behaviour it is much less formalised in the kinship system (indeed in society as a whole) when compared with shame, respect and joking relations. These are regarded as fairly distinct aspects of interpersonal relations which involve some kind of a behavioural criterion or marker, like not eating out of the same bowl, or joking [128] about sexual intercourse, etc. Notwithstanding the possibility of its creation by the anthropologist, rather than the people themselves, as a category of kinship behaviour of the same order as the others, numkam (friendship) seems to be a characteristic of kinship relations as it is of any human situation wherein people live, eat, play, earn their living and feel themselves to make up a unity of some sort.

603 There is a high degree of expressive and affective fondness found in the joking relationships between grandparents and grandchildren which centers, as we have seen, most intensively around the namesake attribute of the same relationship. Because of

593 father's compound to stray no more (his mother and father have never been divorced).

602 Informants always refer to matrilateral relationships as being somewhat affective and allowing of emotional expression and friendship because, they say, "These relatives are like your mother and therefore they love you very much." Such a description is rarely heard from an informant when he discusses patrilateral relationships.

604 In the parent generation there is a tendency for the drop in shame responses which accompany the shift in ego's relationships with own parents to parents' junior collaterals to be accompanied by a small rise in friendship to these relatives. There is also some friendship between ego and his parent's older siblings, but tempered with much respect by ego.

572 602 There is much friendship practised between ego and his collaterals, senior and junior, especially of the same sex as long as the age difference between them is not great. It is primarily from among kin members of the same age that ego chooses his kinship ashirmanzé (literally: his secrets-man, i.e. his most intimate [476] friend) if any of these are taken from among the kin members. They also form one of the natural sources from which ego may draw his sárwa (informal cooperative work group) of 4-10 persons for any piece of work he might require to have done. As in any society ego not only looks to kin members of the same age but outwards to neighbouring compounds and quarters for his friendship ties, his sárwa contributions, and his ashirmanzé.

593 There is a possibility of a strong affection and friend-

593 ship developing in the husband-wife relationship depending upon
[565] the stability of the union. Such friendships are aided and abetted
[586] by cousin marriage as well as by upper class position where the divorce rate does not seem to be as high.

• 572 156 Finally, an examination of the nature of friendship in general excluding the grandparent-grandchild, and mother-child relations reveals some unique features which arise from its setting in the total social organization. The question can be raised as to why it is that friendship is not formalised or structured to the same extent as the other behaviours associated with the kinship system. Certainly, an immediate answer lies in the universal nature of this kind of interpersonal relationship, i.e., its affectivity and expressive content, and the concomitant emotional satisfactions which people obtain from such associations. These tend to create a large area for personality characteristics to determine exactly who among the available persons, for example age-mates in the kindred, ego will move toward in expanding and contracting his friendships. As in our society, social factors such as socio-economic status, occupation, residence patterns, ethnic background, and norms of upward mobility all enter into such choices as well. But there is more to Kanuri friendship relations than a mere addition or interaction of these idiosyncratic features of personality attraction and repulsion on the one hand and sociological variables on the other.

572 Informants were forever telling the anthropologist that someone he mentioned was a friend of theirs, although no affective or emotional or for that matter any very real social relationship existed between them. They meant, of course, that they liked

572 to include as many people as possible under the category of friend. On the other side of the question, what we in our culture would consider a very close friendship can be restricted or terminated for any one of a number of reasons, running from a shift in residence 572 to uneven upward mobility on the part of the friends. When friends 201 actually do have to part, great protestations of affection and sadness are often made at the time of leave-taking, especially and in much greater part, by the person remaining behind. Occasions like this are not uncommon. On one of these, a local official had received a much higher office in the capital. At a small gathering of his friends before his departure, heavy emotional displays of sadness and actual bereavement were made by many of his friends — they were losing such a good friend — why was he leaving them? — couldn't he stay? — did he realize how sad he was making them all feel? — he would forget them all now — etc. There was no mention whatsoever of his good fortune in receiving such an honourable and prestigeful promotion in the State. The sadness seemed more an expression of the group's dissatisfaction with their friend's departure than one of melancholy at his leaving, and it lasted only until his departure on the part of all but his very close ashirmanzé (intimate friend) who because of other circumstances in the situation had extremely few real friends and, therefore, suffered a more profound loss.

829 There is a cultural evaluation of interpersonal relations which underlies all Kanuri attitudes about their social life. Relationships achieved and/or ascribed are good, and more importantly, they are potentially profitable and satisfying phenomena. Conse-

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Consequently, any informant will tell of a host of friends that he possesses. Contrarily, the loss or lessening of interaction in any relationship is a bad thing, and a departing friend is mourned at during his leaving as a loss to self and admonished over and over again not to forget his friends either directly — "Don't forget me," — or indirectly — "You will forget me now." —. This explains why no one mentioned the official's good luck in obtaining a promotion, the total emphasis being on the loss which his good fortune had inflicted on his friends. However, he was still a friend and would always be referred to as such if they were questioned. Thus, many of the friendships reported on are due to past associations now inactive, or often because of hoped-for associations in the future. Because of this constant interplay of friendship as a value per se with the non-permanent quality of many relationships through time the Kanuri often seem to the Western observer to lack "sincerity" in the emotional quality of their friendships except in rare cases of extreme intimacy. However, even in the latter a long-term basis is not necessarily a concomitant of mutual intimacy. Since it is good and desirable to have as many friends as possible, from previous associations as well as in terms of future possibilities, the social and physical mobility and the sheer numbers of such relationships dictate that an individual cannot have an expressive-affective relationship with all of them. Nor can he expect or predict when a really operative friendship (even in the kinship system) may be broken. Consequently, he learns to anticipate the possible break-up of any particular interpersonal relation at any time as part of his social interactions and concentrates, if he is successful in his culture,

572
829 on learning how to create as many relationships as possible for himself to cover the inevitable break-ups which occur in present social relations. As a result, to a Western observer, the friendhip relations may seem to have a superficial quality which involves many references to good friends, what they do and will do for ego, with subsequently very little proof of the validity of such claims. Although certainly the emotional content can be and is, in many ways, as real and sincere as in any comparable human situation anywhere. The essential difference here is the institutionalized recognition and acceptance of the brittleness of interpersonal relations as a necessary behavioural aspect of a complex social organisation which has been operating over a wide territory and population through a long history. Our social reality is not so different, but our culture has idealised Damon and Pythias.

Residence Patterns

592
[571] Although it is a basic tenet in the present discussion
[602] that Kanuri behavioural norms and the texture of interpersonal relations in the total society have their foundations in the kinship system, it must also be realised that the fundamental unit of social organization in which these behaviours operate is the compound or household (fato). This is a walled-in area which encloses a readily
592 identifiable group in the community. The walls are of mud or grass
351 matting depending on the socio-economic level of the householder and the community at large, as well as upon a cheap abundant supply of clay-mud. Magumeri had only one mud walled compound, that of the District Head, while other towns such as Geidam have almost all compounds enclosed with mud walls. The walls are usually about five feet tall, but vary from place to place.

583 This determines
434 that for the majority of the population, marriages take place from
[585] about November to the end of February. The exceptions to this rule occur among those with a steady source of income or access to loans.
583 The agnatic kin group plus own-mother, if she is able, can be counted
602 on to help as well. As we have seen in Chapter IV, exceptions to this traditional custom can be found when a relative is against a young man's marriage because it will deprive the relative of the social and economic advantages of the young man's dependence.

583 The Kanuri say that a man who is not in debt to his friends
585 after contracting and carrying out a marriage has no friends. In other
426 words, for everyone, except the extremely wealthy, it is a mark of one's
572 own social role in a relational network to borrow from friends at the time of one's wedding. Failure to do so is a declaration by implication that the marrying individual does not trust his friends well enough to become obligated to them. His friends may also suspect that he has enough liquid capital to be independent of them (and benevolent superiors). Such action may easily lead to a flurry of attempts to borrow money from the prospective bridegroom as soon as the wedding is over.
583 Finally, a young man may expect and borrow money from anyone, besides
585 the above, to whom he renders service and to whom he gives discipline-
426 respect. Indeed a compound head or any political figure knows that lend-
571 ing and giving money for weddings is a primary method of maintaining subservience of subordinates.

583 In Kanuri society there are two related ways of regarding
585 the cost of carrying out a marriage (male speaking). Firstly, there is the cost of the entire proceedings, including cloth purchases, gifts of sundries, soap, perfumes, oil, a ram, fees to participant friends, entertainers, bridewealth, etc., minus the gifts from the girl's family and

433 of distribution of goods and services is a necessity for the operation
44
[441] of the social system. In Bornu this takes the form of a market econ-
omy and a specialist occupation of wholesale and retail trade.

443 Traditionally markets are held weekly (the Kanuri have a
805 seven day week), and are referred to locally by the name of the day on which they are held. This week day name is extended as a second name for the market town itself, so that both the town and the market are known by two names. Thus in Magumeri a man may say, "I am going to Thursday, this Monday", and his hearers understand that on Monday he is going to Ngubura, the town that holds its market on Thursday. This is much less common for towns and cities which have major political functions, such as district capitals, or the capital city of Bornu.

443 Markets in rural Bornu are best described as interlocking
366 series of cycles which overlap but are never completely congruent for any two market towns. A market cycle includes all the markets which the people of a town attend in their own locality. In Magumeri people who regularly attend markets go to Ngubura (five miles south) on Thursday, Ardoram (seven miles north) on Monday, and their own Magumeri market on Sunday. There are smaller markets in towns without motor road facilities on Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday, which are attended less frequently and these are all within a radius of five to ten miles of Magumeri. People in Ardoram have their own cycle which interlocks with the Magumeri one, but includes markets which Magumeri people rare-
443 ly visit, especially to the north. Thus Kachella, a seller of tobacco
366 flowers in Magumeri, has many good friends in Ngubura and Ardoram where
572 he attends markets regularly. He stays with these friends on occasion if he remains overnight or arrives early for a market. They, in their turn, visit and sometimes stay overnight with him when they come to

443 Magumeri for the Sunday market. Kachella feels that these people are his
366 friends. On the other hand, although Kachella's market friends to the
572 north are known to and known by his market friends to the south, they are not "friends" to one another. Again, the friends to the south have their own friends farther south at markets which Kachella rarely visits. Thus market cycles are overlapping, interlocking networks of social and economic relations which vary for each market town.

443 Beside the interlocking cycle of local markets, each town
366 and/or cycle has some kind of link with a larger center of the export-
439 import trade, the two largest being Maiduguri in the south, and Nguru
[437] (the rail head) in the extreme northwest of the Emirate. Traditionally trading caravans set out from Maiduguri once every two weeks for remote market towns. Although less important today, these can still be
[494] seen. If there are roads, lorries bring people and goods from the larger centres early on market day and return at night or the next day with rural purchasers and travellers returning to or visiting the large urban centre.

443 One of the chief features resulting from this system of
366 distribution is that markets on motor roads assume primary importance
494 while those back in the bush are becoming secondary, and are less well attended. However, the interlocking nature of the rural market cycles makes for ease of communication and distribution in the region as a whole, and this is accentuated by the direct links with the centre and the modern use of lorries as the primary means of transport.

366 The relation between market towns and population size is
494 indirect. Very few market towns in Bornu have population aggregates
161 of under one thousand, while the presence of a market and, more im-
[162] portantly, a motor road tend to stimulate population growth. Thus pop-

438 guri from Jos, Kano and other parts of Nigeria.
442

Ajimi regularly obtains his nuts from four of these traders, all of whom he visits, and all of whose goods he inspects and prices before he decides where to place his order. He strongly asserts that his primary criterion in making the decision as to where to buy is the quality of the nuts. Two of the suppliers are Kanuri, one of whom owns his own lorries; the other two are Hausa. Ajimi has gone to other suppliers in the past but could not, at the time of this study, remember their names. By going to the same supplier over and over again with his uncle's money, he builds up confidence, and has on several occasions obtained an extra kwando on credit from one of the Kanuri suppliers, the profits ofwhich he kept entirely for himself.

435 Although there is some variation in price, it generally
438 occurs at the retail level, while for bulk shipments cash prices re-
442 main fairly constant, and it is quantity which varies with supply, quality and demand. Thus £20.0.0 is generally the price for a kwando of kola-nuts (a large rafia rope-bound package). A kwando contains seven thousand to eight thousand nuts depending upon their size, quality and the state of the market at any particular time. After returning to Magumeri, Ajimi generally gets back about £32.0.0 per kwando and returns the money, plus half the profits (i.e. £6.0.0) to Alkali Bukar. This buying and selling procedure takes him between thirteen to seventeen days or roughly two weekly market cycles.

572 He wholesales his nuts in the Magumeri area and regularly
438 attends the Magumeri (Sunday), Gamiram (Thursday),(1) and Ardoram (Monday)
442 markets.
[366]

(1) He avoids the more usual Thursday market at Ngubura and attends the Gajiram market because it has no motor road, and he finds less competition and a smaller number of kola-nut wholesalers there than at Ngubura.

442 markets. The nuts are sold to any kola-nut retailer (bakama) who wishes
572 to buy them, but Ajimi named thirty-five of these whom he considered to be "friends" and more regular customers than others. At the same time
442 they buy from other and bigger wholesalers.(1) Retailers also use stan-
452 dards of quality as well as price in their buying discriminations, but
572 are interested even more in obtaining a credit relationship with their supplier. To his thirty-five "regulars", which include four consanguineal kin, Ajimi does extend credit if requested and this is fairly often. He does not give credit to a stranger, a man he does not consider a "friend", i.e. with whom he has had little contact. This credit can mount up and if several debtors leave for other places in Bornu, Ajimi can conclude his selling trip with a loss rather than a gain. This happened to him in July, 1955, when he reportedly lost £12.0.0 on one kwando of kola-nuts. The people who owed him money all seemed to be moving around the country at the time and he was left with a lot of bad debts from retailers who had moved off to other parts of Bornu.

442 When asked specifically, Ajimi replies that Alkali Bukar is
571 his mai gida, but when describing the relationship in his own words he does not use the term. Instead, he repeatedly refers to himself as the tada of the Alkali and says that this person is "like his father".
[602] That is to say, although the mai gida relationship can be used to describe what happens between Ajimi and his Fa-Ol-Bro, it is more often used when the relationship is not truly consanguineal.

Ajimi is quite prepared to move into a barzum relationship with any of the four big traders from whom he buys if this could be arranged profitably between them. Indeed, Ajimi is very much on the look-

(1) Ajimi only sells one kwando per trading trip, while others distribute anywhere from two to six.